

Hello,

My name is John. I am a life-so-far resident, I feel passionate about this and I thank you in advance for reading my letter and taking in consideration what my thoughts are towards the Vaccine Passport. I have lived in Rockville my entire life. I was born in Shady Grove Hospital in '85, grew up in Twinbrook, bought a house in Twinbrook & I will probably spend my twilight years here as well. As big as the population has grown, I still sense a small-town charm here when I drive home from work. I have not been vocal to my local council in regards to my children's school policies, vaccines, business closing's then reopening's, masks on - masks off, etc. My thoughts have always been; You have an enormous amount of people to please and serve. I am just one guy with a beautiful wife & 3 children. My point I am meandering around to is, as much as I have seen Rockville and Montgomery County prosper and grow, I do not believe a Vaccine requirement in the form of a Passport is a good idea. In fact, I believe the Passport idea is a regression from our 'Most Progressive County in MD' nick-name (of which I personally am proud to hear us called).

I could, like Dr. Stoddard had mentioned he would in the meeting on January 11th bring you data that I have collected from the CDC to back up my claim. However, by the time it's compiled and displayed, it's just old data. It will be moot because we are in an age with access to ever changing data. Being as it is actually very simple to collect data from [wonder.cdc.com](https://www.cdc.gov) and skew it to my view, I am no statistician. I do not have time to build a case that involves data that will then be scrutinized. Neither should Dr Stoddard, if I may say. Unless his doctorate in mathematics & statistics or works for Facebook, he should 'stay in his lane.'

What scares me and really does keep me up at night is the fact that our local government will in essence be requiring me & my family to get a vaccine in order to be a part of our community. It scares me that we could be headed to a more inclusive based society with an 'if'. To me, it seems like a vaccine mandate, but we are calling it a Passport. My children have had enough vaccine requirements for MCPS already, they do not need anymore. For example, in order for me to take my two daughters on a date to a restaurant and then the already empty and every other seat vacant movie theater, I would need to provide proof of vaccination for everyone by March 1st. Honestly, I never thought I would ever have to prove anything of the sort in my life. In other words, I would get turned away because 'we don't serve your kind here' if I don't have my phone on me and God-forbid, I leave one of my 7-year-old daughter's proposed ID card at home. That is just one selfish example, however. There are so many more real-life examples that do not involve myself or my family that I will not elaborate on, but know that this Passport will encourage.

What scares me is using quick witted and timely political 'state of emergency power' to increase restrictions that oddly seem to have ever-extending expiration dates. That alone, is an example of the regressive statement about the county I made prior. This ideology will almost be guaranteed to sift and wade throughout the community. However, this will be thought of, but never spoken of. Undoubtedly, this Passport idea will pass the vote and it will be easy to implement because of the technology that we have in our smartphones. People will easily and happily comply. More importantly to note, people will comply strongly out of fear and hope. The hope is this 'could be the last Covid Restriction' you place us under (it probably won't be) and the fear would be if they do not comply they will be persecuted, prosecuted, embarrassed, shamed & shunned by their neighbors (we do not serve your kind here,

again). Oddly enough, the government remaining seemingly bipartisan against Covid is now for community compliance and punishing people who are not vaccinated, nay - forcing people to vaccinate.

I ask myself daily, in what way is this considered effective to coerce the community without segregating it more? Haven't we been segregated enough? Has everyone already forgotten the 2020 rallies? Haven't we been 'socially distant' enough? Must we continue to comply with a seemingly endless increase in restrictions on our daily life? Are we so privileged in Montgomery County that we will only accept patronage from people who are vaccinated forever? Are we so privileged that we will only employ people who are vaccinated forever? Is it a privilege to allow this legislature from our government and we should be blissful & thankful? Must we always comply for the greater good of the community or face a fine? Or have to explain ourselves in public? Or is it a burden to let people choose to do what they want? Are Vaccine Passports an ultimatum in disguise? Is the fear of covid a burden on our society and we the people are to blame for viewing things opposite of the current normal? I could go on, but please note this in part thanks to the proposal to segregate the population over vaccination. 'We are all in this together, but only if you are vaccinated here in MoCo' is where I think we are headed and I do not think in this day in age 'but only if' is good thing anymore.

We can hope that the Vaccine Passports will improve our daily lives. We can hope that after two (going on three) years, this really is our last attempt with what seems like our endless supply of Hail Mary's to save our community of the vaccinated. But when is it time to move on? If you do move forward with Elrich's proposal, we can hope that these Passports will help boost our already extremely high vaccination rate and weed out the unvaccinated (sarcasm). Sorry for the bluntness but that's what is generally being said right now amongst the commonfolk. It disgusts me that people actually say that around here. I do not blame them. It really isn't their fault. They were not always this way; they were coerced into it.

I believe Passports will NOT help us with 'controlling' the virus, nor any other virus. The virus knows no borders (pun intended). In my opinion, the Passports will help us further chariot what some may call: a 'privileged' community in the eyes of our neighboring counties.

I fear that empowering people, governments, businesses and our community as a whole with a tool that highly suggests segregation without the word segregation is just what Montgomery County needs to keep on regressing into an inclusive (with a 'but') community. I know most people will say or think, "No, this will not be conveyed, written, or enforced in way to cause harm or segregate. We will make sure everyone gets vaccinated prior to this program going into effect." To assume with a generic thought or statement written one-way or another as a reason for allowing Vaccine Passports, does convey an assumptive expectation of mass compliance. This assumptive compliance implies 'writing off' any allowance of our residents saying the word 'No' or giving them the opportunity to make their own decision without fear of missing out and being a part of our not-so inclusive community. It is the complete opposite of democratic law (which is what we should be striving for).

Basically, this Passport program is almost a 'backdoor-way' to mandate a vaccine for all Moco residents and visitors who patronize our community. I cannot fathom how anyone would be able to effectively require a Vaccine Passport based off of the incoherent and ever-changing theory from The WHO & CDC of what our current vaccine status should be against any current variant in the future. Here is a current example: as of mid-January, the CDC says to get a booster while the WHO says to hold off. Yet, our

government is going to tell us what we 'really should be doing.' In short, we would base a law off an unproven theory. Mind-blowingly bureaucratically backwards.

You guys have been doing everything in your power to help. Credit is due for appreciation and I appreciate you. Passports could be another avenue of a pointless attempt at controlling a virus with just a little too much unchecked un-expirable power, even for us privileged in Montgomery County or any other county. We are not New York or California. We should not emulate who we do not want to become. I don't want live in New York and I do not want to live in California. I like Maryland and I like Montgomery, so far. For the sake of finding a better solution and stopping the data fear mongering, do NOT implement Vaccine Passports, please. Montgomery County is better than that, we are better than this.

Thanks, John Eckhardt

p.s. I'm vaccinated. My family is too. I didn't write you as the 'anti-vaxxer' I wrote you because I felt passionate about this